
CULTURAL ASPECT

Language enjoys intimate connections with culture and its practices. The meaning of a particular word is sometimes determined by cultural patterns. Therefore, some semanticists say that the culture of a group should be considered or taken into account while knowing the semantic aspects of words.

SCIENTIFIC ASPECT

According to Leonard Bloomfield, linguistics is a thoroughly scientific discipline and it was claimed that each linguistic element can scientifically be defined. Bloomfield was ambitious to give scientific explanation of each word to know its meaning. However, he could give scientific explanation of trees, plants, chemicals etc. but when he was confronted with the words like love, hate happiness etc. he was unable to define them scientifically. Finally, he concluded that since meaning is mental phenomenon and unobservable, it should be excluded from the study of language. It was clear that scientific explanation was enough to know the meaning of words. This is the limitation of the science. However, it is out of frustration that Bloomfield tried to exclude semantics from linguistics.

LINGUISTIC ASPECT

Geoffrey Leech proposed the linguistic approach in his book entitled 'Semantics'. He is of the opinion that the problem of defining meaning can only be solved by limiting the scope of study of meaning within the linguistic framework and not by taking it outside the linguistic context. The main contention of Leech's views is that the problem of defining meaning aroused due its association with non-linguistic factors. Taking semantics outside linguistics is as vain as the search for the exit in a room which has no doors at all. So the problem is to be solved by linguistic means. Psychological, sociological and scientific factors are non-linguistic factors and they have nothing to do with defining meaning. In the linguistic approach to the study of meaning, Leech wants to recommend the observation of meaning relations at both the word and sentence level. In addition to it, the native speaker's linguistic competence and the knowledge of the world are essential things in the study of meaning under linguistic approach to the study of meaning.

CONTEXTUAL ASPECT

Pragmatists suggest the importance of the context in the study of meaning. The meaning of the words or sentences, they argue, depends on the interpretation of the context. Words or sentences refer to something and something is nothing but context. Unless the context is provided to language, one can not make out the meaning.

CONCLUSION

This is how various aspects of meaning are discussed by the experts in the field of semantics. Despite this varied nature of the meaning, it has remained an enigma in the sense that no linguist is able to state the nature of meaning with full confirmation of facts surrounding the nature of meaning. Therefore, the nature of meaning has remained an illusion, trying to evade the authenticity about it. So what is meaning is big question mark?

REFERENCES

Geoffrey Leech : Semantics
Palmer : Semantics